

# SSEO Newsletter Spring 2025

Dear Chairperson/ Principal,

I hope this finds you well.

Spring has finally arrived, and we are now heading into the second half of yet another very busy school year. In this newsletter, we have included details of forthcoming BOM training events, along with some brief reminders regarding the documentation which schools must submit to the Patron each year.



Training for chairpersons and principals in the Parental Complaints Procedure and Working Together procedures will be delivered before the Easter break. This will be followed by training in recruitment procedures during the final term.

We hope that you find this newsletter helpful, and we look forward to meeting with our chairpersons and principals at some of our training events over the coming weeks and months.

Le gach dea ghúí

*Aislinn Foley*

## Revised Parental Complaints Procedure & Working Together Document

A revised Parental Complaints Procedure was introduced in January 2024. This is a nationally agreed procedure, applicable to all primary schools, and is the correct vehicle through which parents can raise any concerns they may have with the school and seek to have them resolved.

Similarly, a revised version of the Working Together document was recently published. This document contains three nationally agreed procedures through which staff relations issues, allegations of bullying & harassment, and grievances, which arise among teaching staff should be addressed. The publication of this new document is very welcome, as it offers greater clarity to schools around the steps to be taken at each stage of these three procedures. To access a copy of the Working Together document in English, or, as Gaeilge, please click [here](#)

**Boards of Management which have not yet formally adopted these procedures should do so at their next meeting and these documents should be brought to the attention of the relevant staff.**

Where a special needs assistant wishes to raise a grievance, this should be addressed in accordance with the provisions of Circular 0072/2011, available [here](#)

## Board of Management Training

Training for chairpersons and principals in the implementation of the Parental Complaints and Working Together Procedures will take place as listed below. You may register for your venue of choice, but we kindly request that you register at one venue only. We are noticing a significant increase in the number of parents, and staff, who are opting to invoke these procedures, and progress through to the formal stages. Therefore, **we urge our chairpersons and principals to attend this training together because the relationship between these two parties is key to the management of these procedures at local level.**

- Tuesday 18th March: Brehon Hotel Killarney, Co. Kerry
- Tuesday 25th March: Castletroy Park Hotel, Co. Limerick
- Thursday 27th March: Abbey Court Hotel, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary
- Thursday 3rd April: Inn @ Dromoland, Ennis, Co. Clare

Tea and coffee will be available at 5:30pm in each venue and the training session itself will run from 6pm for about an hour and a half.

The registration link for these training events will issue in a separate email next week, so please keep an eye out for that. Please be aware that the four events listed above are the only training sessions which will be delivered by St. Senan's Education Office on these procedures.

Training in recruitment procedures for chairpersons, principals, and independent assessors will be delivered after the Easter holidays. Please be advised that we are not currently accepting any further applications from serving principals for inclusion on our panel of independent assessors.

## Certificate to Teach Religious Education

The Council for Catechetics of the Irish Episcopal Conference requires all teachers employed in Catholic primary schools to hold a recognised certificate to teach Religious Education. There is an exception for teachers who were trained in Ireland, or in the UK, prior to 2011. The four Patrons of all schools served by St. Senan's Education Office have requested that boards of management ensure the requirement to hold a recognised certificate is communicated to all teaching staff, so that teachers, who wish to apply for the positions of Principal, or Deputy Principal, are aware that they will not be shortlisted for interview unless they hold the recognised certificate. Similarly, teachers who wish to be considered for permanent, fixed term, or specified purpose, positions in Catholic primary schools can only be shortlisted if they hold the recognised certificate. Boards of Management are advised to record the fact that this information was communicated to all teaching staff in the BOM minutes. For further details on the colleges/institutions whose religious education certificate is recognised by the Council for Catechetics of the IEC, please click [here](#)

## Appointing an Assistant Principal 1 and Assistant Principal II

Where a school has a vacancy for the position of Assistant Principal 1 or Assistant Principal II, the Board of Management must ensure that an appropriate consultation process has taken place before the position is advertised. The purpose of the consultation process is to establish the needs & priorities of the school, and the roles & responsibilities which will attach to the post. A copy of the advertisement should be posted in the staff room, and a copy must be sent, by email, or registered post, to all members of the teaching staff who are on approved leave. The independent assessor for these selection boards will be appointed directly by our office.

## Admissions Policies & Notices

Where the Board of Management has reviewed its Admissions Policy, please submit the revised draft policy to [aoife.foley@limerickdiocese.org](mailto:aoife.foley@limerickdiocese.org) for review and approval. Once we have returned the approved PDF copy of your policy with the Patron's seal, please ensure that the newly approved policy is uploaded onto the school website. Schools which are opening a special class in September are reminded that their policy will need to be amended to reflect this addition and Patron approval of this amendment must be sought prior to publication of the revised policy.

## Submission of School Accounts to the Patron

The deadline for submission of the certified school accounts for the 2023/24 school year to the FSSU is Friday 28th February. You are reminded that schools are also obliged to submit a copy of their accounts to the Patron each year. Quite a few schools have not yet submitted a copy of their certified school accounts for the 2022/23 school year to our office. If your school has not yet done so, you are kindly asked to submit the accounts without further delay.

Schools in the Dioceses of Killaloe and Kerry should submit their accounts to [linda.fleming@limerickdiocese.org](mailto:linda.fleming@limerickdiocese.org) whilst schools in the Archdiocese of Cashel & Emly and the Diocese of Limerick should submit their accounts to [gwen.osullivan@limerickdiocese.org](mailto:gwen.osullivan@limerickdiocese.org)

If your board of management has any concerns regarding the school finances, please contact the FSSU for advice at: [primary@fssu.ie](mailto:primary@fssu.ie) or 01 9104020. Any suspected irregularities in the school's finances should also be notified to the Patron immediately, by contacting Aoife or Kevin.



## Submission of Annual Review Documents to the Patron

Confirmation of the annual review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Anti-Bullying Policy should be submitted to the Patron once the review by the Board of Management is complete.

Schools in the Dioceses of Killaloe and Kerry should submit copies of their annual review documents to [linda.fleming@limerickdiocese.org](mailto:linda.fleming@limerickdiocese.org) whilst schools in the Archdiocese of Cashel & Emly and the Diocese of Limerick should submit their review documents to [gwen.osullivan@limerickdiocese.org](mailto:gwen.osullivan@limerickdiocese.org)

## Wellbeing and the Catholic School

The Council for Catechetics, assisting the Council for Education of the Irish Episcopal Conference, has published a new document for primary and post-primary Catholic Schools entitled, "Wellbeing and the Catholic School." Drawing inspiration from both Christian teachings and governmental strategies, the document highlights how Catholic schools create environments that foster resilience, hope, and moral integrity, ensuring students thrive, not just academically, but as whole individuals. This resource offers practical insights for school leaders, teachers, and parents to embed a Catholic vision of wellbeing into policies, curriculum, and daily practices. You are requested to bring this document to the attention of members of the BOM, staff, and parents in your school community please. The document is available online at:

<https://catholiceducation.ie/wellbeing-resources/>

## Recent Department of Education Circulars

- [Circular 0080/2024: New Measures to Support the Forward Planning of Special Education Provision](#)
- [Circular 0081/2024: Understanding Behaviours of Concern and Responding to Crisis Situations\\_ Guidelines for Schools in Supporting Students](#)
- [Circular 0005/2025: Special Education Allocation for the 2025-2026 School Year](#)
- [Circular 0010/2025: Gaeltacht Recognition Scheme: Continued Implementation of the Scheme in primary and Special Schools](#)
- [Circular 0011/2025: Staffing Arrangements in Primary School for the 2025/26 School Year](#)



## Lenten Reflection

Lent harmonises with the arrival of spring, the lengthening of days and the appearance of snowdrops and daffodils. All around us, the shoots of spring begin to reveal themselves and an optimistic tone enters our being. A time of new beginnings and an abundance of life awaits. Let us open our eyes as nature reveals itself this year, indeed let all of our senses be alert to the hidden secrets of nature yet to be revealed – let us allow our minds to be alert to the majesty of creation and to the hope that lies ahead.

Lent too, invites us to be alert to the majesty within ourselves, providing us with an invitation to reflect, make changes and grow. May we reconnect with our spirituality and work to be better examples to our young people.

So let us set our course, let us set out our mission for this Year of Hope, so that we may make an imprint that lasts, on all the young minds that we are privileged to inspire.

*"Show me your ways, Lord,  
teach me your paths.  
Guide me in your truth and teach me,  
for you are God my Savior,  
and my hope is in you all day long."*

*Psalm 25: 4-5*

